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CIA TRIES TO CALL BACK NICARAGUA MANUALS
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The CIA is trying to recall several thousand copies of its psychological warfare manual that advises Nicaraguan rebels in the "selective use of violence" to "neutralize" government officials.

Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., a Senate Intelligence Committee member, said Tuesday that CIA officials had told him they had ordered a "full recall" of all versions of the book and were instructing rebels that its contents "should be ignored."

A committee source said CIA officials also mentioned the recall during a closed briefing on Monday. The source, who insisted on anonymity, said the agency was trying to recover several thousand printed copies of three versions of the manual.

Meanwhile, in Green Bay, Wis., Vice President George Bush said he expects the president ultimately to "take the responsibility" for the manual's distribution.

Bush, a former CIA director said, "I've never seen a man who ultimately will take responsibility for things like the president." He added that "neutralize" in the manual "could mean various things."

White House spokesman Larry Speakes said he did not know what was meant by the word "neutralize." Asked about the CIA briefing on the manual that appeared to conflict with Reagan's debate explanation, Speakes said, "We'll wait 'til our investigation is complete" before commenting further.

CIA officials have told members of Congress that some deletions were made from the original manual produced last October, but that all editions including one approved at CIA headquarters contained references to using violence to "neutralize" Nicaraguan government officials.

President Reagan had asserted during Sunday's presidential debate that pages dealing with assassination were removed. He added that 12 copies of the original with references to such violent acts "some way ... got out down there."

Sen. Sam Nunn, D-Ga., an intelligence committee member, said the word "neutralize" is subject to various interpretations, but added that when read in context, "it could lead one to the conclusion that the president's policy (barring assassinations) was being or could possibly be breached."

"Neutralize" is not defined in the manual but references to "danger to other individuals in the area of the target" and to assessing likely replacements suggest that the goal is to remove the officials physically.

CIA spokeswoman Patti Volz continued to refuse any comment about the manual.

On Saturday, Edgar Chamorro, chief of propaganda for the Nicaraguan Democratic Force, known by its Spanish initials FDN, said it is the "practice" of his Honduran-based group to execute captured government officials who are deemed "criminals" by the local population.

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Chamorro's remarks were disavowed by other FDN officials Monday. FDN spokesman Bosco Matamoros said, "We always reject and condemn political assassination and terrorism."

One source, familiar with the CIA briefing to the committee, said the definition of "assassination" was discussed along with whether executions of security officials as described by Chamorro would come under the term.

Presidential executive orders dating back to the Ford administration have prohibited U.S. government involvement in assassination, but as in the latest intelligence guidelines approved by Reagan on Dec. 4, 1981, the word is not defined.

In an interview with the AP, Leahy said the disputes that have swirled around the Nicaraguan operation for the past two years - including the CIA-supervised mining of Nicaraguan harbors - have damaged the CIA's reputation and indirectly hurt efforts to upgrade its intelligence gathering on such questions as terrorism and arms control.

"So long as you have this program going in any form, it's going to be one stupid thing after another," Leahy said he told agency officials. "You're going to destroy your own credibility as an intelligence agency over one half-baked program in Nicaragua."